

Small Grants Expand Research



Research is an increasingly important part of the activity on Maine Chapter preserves. Initially, the research focused on a basic natural resources inventory of each preserve. Now that information has been gathered, efforts are being made to take an in-depth look at certain aspects of the preserves.

A major step in this process was initiated by the Chapter in 1982 with the Small Grants Program. Although research on the preserves is by no means limited to projects funded by the Small Grants Program, it was felt that such a program could greatly augment research undertaken. In the Program's first year, six projects have been awarded grants totalling \$3,227. As will be evident, some exciting projects will soon be underway. Information produced from these studies should not only aid in the understanding of the preserves, but also lead to better stewardship of the land. A brief look at what took place in 1981 is detailed later in this issue. (See P. 3)

- Two seniors at the University of Maine, Orono, Mimi Boxwell and Karen Lumino, will put their geologic backgrounds to work analyzing the effects of a jetty constructed in Mill Cove, South Portland. Mill Cove Preserve with some 30 acres of mud flats lies behind the jetty. There has been interference in the regular tidal flow of sediments, and the research will look at the jetty's effect on both inshore and offshore transport of marine sediments.
- Following up on an initial study of the mummichog population (*Fundulus heteroclitus*) in the freshwater pond on Damariscove Island Preserve, Greg Garman, a Graduate Assistant at the University of Maine at Orono, will this year look more closely at the energy flow within this pond to evaluate the importance of various sources of energy to the pond system and to determine the production rate of the mummichog population. His research will explore the reasons for such a productive population and will try to determine the source of the nutrients, which so far is unclear.
- Research will also continue on Damariscove on the Island's unusual muskrat population. This study began in 1978 and each year adds new information about this mammal which here has successfully adapted to a dry upland habitat instead of its normal semi-aquatic environment. This year, Dr. Garrett Clough, Associate

Professor of Biology at Nasson College in Springvale, plans to analyze the previous four years' data with the aid of a computer, and also map the density and distribution of the muskrats. In the fall, he will again collect and analyze animals from the muskrat harvest.

- A comprehensive inventory of the lichens at Morse Mountain will be the goal of Barbara Vickery and Anita Bernhardt, two women who have returned to Bates

(continued on p. 2)

New Preserve Acquired



Protection has come to another coastal property, thanks to the most recent efforts of the Maine Chapter. Recognized as a being in a significant bald eagle habitat region, the 80-acre property in Pembroke also includes an extensive intertidal zone. Jutting out into Cobscook Bay, the land area is greatly increased by the 25' tides which occur in this region.

The small peninsula is dominated by white pine, red spruce, and paper birch. There is little evidence of past uses, although it is claimed that the founders of the Town of Pembroke are buried on the property. (continued on p. 2)

Maine Chapter News

Published six times a year by the Maine Chapter of The Nature Conservancy. Comments and contributions of articles are welcome.

Executive Director, John W. Jensen; *Stewardship Director*, Karen M. Gustafson; *Editor*, Mary Minor Lannon; *Administrative Assistant*, Deborah Clark; *Secretary*, Ann Johnson.

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NEW PRESERVE (Continued from page 1)

As with other new preserves, an initial natural resources inventory will be undertaken this summer by an intern. After that, a management plan will be drawn up delineating the best protection methods for the property. There are no trails on the preserve at the moment, and it is not expected that the little use the area receives will change.

The property was purchased by the Chapter utilizing funds from a number of special contributions for this purpose.

Contributions in memory of the following have been received by the Maine Chapter Office

Richard Saltonstall, Jr.
Florence Way



John W. Jensen
Executive Director

A majority of Americans think that spiders have ten legs, that an iguana is an insect, and that a koala is a bear. This is according to an article in the Bangor Daily News about a recent Yale University study.

I suppose this should not really be surprising. In fact, it's probably not all that important that people know just how many legs a spider has (8), what an iguana is (a lizard), or what a koala is (a marsupial).

It is important that people understand that there is a reason for these creatures and how they evolve. It is important that people search to understand the whys and hows of the natural system.

While the more visible portion of the Maine Chapter's work has always been its acquisitions, we are deeply involved in careful stewardship and management of our preserves as well. Caring for the land requires that we understand its special features.

Frequently, we find that the special features we are trying to protect are not fully understood, even by the experts. Lacking proper information, we make our best judgment. But this is not really enough.

SMALL GRANTS (Continued from Page 1)

College for degrees in Botany. They plan to examine both the TNC lands and the major Bates-Morse Mountain Coastal Research Area. The study is expected to yield valuable information on one of the area's most unusual communities and also assess some of the human impact upon the lichens which are so susceptible to disturbance.

- Mark McCullough, a Research Assistant at the University of Maine, Orono, plans to gather much-needed data on the American bald eagle's habits. Using Cobscook Bay as a study area, he will radio tag several eagles of different ages and monitor their activities. Relatively little is known about the habits of the eagles after they leave the nest, so this data should be extremely valuable. Several TNC preserves in the Cobscook Bay area will be included in the research.
- Finally, but not at all least, will be a comparison study by John R. Moring, Assistant Professor of Zoology at the University of Maine, Orono, of the intertidal areas of three preserves. For the past three years, he has studied the intertidal fishes off the Schoodic Peninsula. Now he plans to look at fishes inhabiting the tide pools of Damariscope Island, Great Wass Island, and Morse Mountain where three distinct habitats are represented. He will be able to compare offshore island, rocky shore, and salt marsh environments, which should produce some interesting results.



Part of the solution to better care for the lands we own is included in the Small Grants Program that the Chapter has initiated. By providing a modest grant to help defray expenses of a graduate student conducting a research project, we stand to gain a good deal of knowledge at a low cost.

Sometimes the research is very practical — a jetty was built next to one of our preserves and we want to know how that will affect the rate of siltation.

In other cases, research is directed at a more basic level of understanding. For example, another project is directed at finding out more about bald eagles in Maine. In spite of the long history of eagles in Maine, we still do not know, with any certainty, what the average or productive life span of these birds is. We have reports of fledgling eagles going as far as a hundred and fifty miles in a few days. Where do they go? If they are born in Maine, do they return here to mate and find a nest? Less than 50% of the fledglings survive the first five years, and some studies elsewhere suggest that as many as 90% may not survive this crucial period. What is the actual rate? Why? Can we improve this survival rate somehow, or is this rate normal?

The eagle is a highly-visible, majestic symbol of our country. It is also very much endangered. If we know so little about the eagle and its needs, how much work needs to be done to understand and protect other species that do not capture the public imagination?

Fortunately, you and other members of the Maine Chapter have shown an understanding of why these species must be protected.

Protecting and caring for species that we do not fully understand is vital. If we are unable to protect their habitats, the needed research will never occur.

We must learn more and protect more. Perhaps in the process, we will find that spiders with ten legs do exist.



MAINE CHAPTER FIELD TRIPS



You are invited to visit and learn more about the Maine TNC Preserves. A wide range of Preserves will be visited this year, from forested coastal islands to inland streams. The trips are informal, leaders (trained naturalists and members of local Stewardship Committees) are helpful and knowledgeable, and your questions are always welcome. Natural, as well as human and local history of the Preserves will be emphasized. Join new friends and old in seeing new places, identifying wildflowers and birds, and enjoying the outdoors.

RESERVATIONS:

Make your reservations early. They will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis; members of The Nature Conservancy have first preference for trip space. Reservations may be made in writing or in person. Use the attached registration form.

RATES:

To secure your place on any trip, we must have received your fare at least five days in advance of the trip. The prices reflect the direct costs of the trip, and a percentage of the indirect costs of maintaining our reservation system and printing. Non-members may pay member rates if TNC membership is attained at the time of registration.

CANCELLATIONS:

The Nature Conservancy reserves the right to cancel any trip. If we must do so, reservation fees will be refunded. We will make every effort to notify you as soon as possible. Due to the minimal registration fee, cancellations made by you will not be refunded. If you need to cancel, please notify the Chapter office at least five days in advance of the trip.

TRIPS WILL BE HELD RAIN OR SHINE

WHAT TO BRING:

Field clothes, sturdy shoes, binoculars, camera, sun/rain protection, insect repellent, lunch, and something to drink. Dress for the weather, both expected and unexpected.

- THE TRIPS -

- MORSE MOUNTAIN - (Phippsburg)

DATE AND TIME: Saturday, June 19, 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

MEETING PLACE: Front Street Delicatessen, 128 Front Street, Bath

COST: \$3 per person (\$6 non-member)

LIMIT: 15 people

The Bates-Morse Mountain Coastal Research Area and The Nature Conservancy's two salt marsh parcels comprise an extensive beach-dune-salt marsh-forested upland system. The day will be spent walking and exploring the ecological significance of these natural features.

- FERNALD'S NECK - (Camden/Lincolntonville)

DATE AND TIME: Sunday, June 27, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

MEETING PLACE: Fernald's Neck Preserve. From Camden, follow Route 52 north about five miles, turn left at a green and white highway marker sign #5016 (Fernald's Neck Road), go approximately one mile to the end of the road.

COST: \$3 per person (\$6 non-member)

LIMIT: 20 people

Fernald's Neck Preserve is located on a peninsula extending into beautiful Megunticook Lake, surrounded by the Camden Hills. Stands of red and white pine and mixed hardwoods vegetate much of the Preserve. The Great Bog, roughly in the center of the Preserve, supports pitcher plants, rose pogonia, blueflag iris, and a variety of sedges, grasses, and rushes. The bog area provides shelter for birds, ducks, and geese to build nests. The afternoon will be spent walking the trails along the shore and through the forest, and along a high rocky ledge overlooking Megunticook Lake.



- BLUE HILL BAY PRESERVES - BOAT TRIP - (Off Mt. Desert Island)

DATE AND TIME: Saturday, July 3, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

MEETING PLACE: Swan's Island Ferry Terminal, Bass Harbor

COST: \$12 per person (\$15 non-member)

LIMIT: 40 people

Four island Preserves lie in picturesque Blue Hill Bay. Relatively bare of trees and ledge-like in character, Ship, Bar, and Trumpet Islands are important nesting sites for common eiders and a variety of seabirds. Thickly forested Placentia Island to the southeast is a historical nesting site for the bald eagle. The morning will be spent boating around these island Preserves looking for bald eagles, black guillemots, cormorants, other seabirds and ducks, and seals.



- THE HERMITAGE/GULF HAGAS - (Katahdin Iron Works)

DATE AND TIME: Saturday, July 10, 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

MEETING PLACE: Katahdin Iron Works Main Gate. Twelve miles north of Brownville Junction, six and a half miles from Route 11.

COST: \$3 per person (\$6 non-member)

LIMIT: 10 people

High above the west branch of the Pleasant River is a stately grove of old-growth white pines known as The Hermitage. The area is rich in the history of the Maine woods and nearby Katahdin Iron Works. The day will be spent hiking the Appalachian Trail and along Gulf Hagas, one of Maine's most spectacular gorges.



- DAMARISCOVE ISLAND - BOAT TRIP - (Boothbay Harbor)

DATE AND TIME: Saturday, July 17, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

MEETING PLACE: Boothbay Harbor Pier (for Argo Excursion Boat)

COST: \$12 per person (\$15 non-member)

LIMIT: 40 people



DAMARISCOVE ISLAND - BOAT TRIP - Saturday, July 17 (continued)

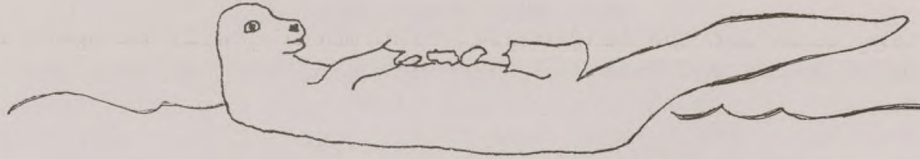
Damariscove Island, off Boothbay, has had a long history of human use, from early Indians, European fishermen and traders, the U. S. Coast Guard, to twentieth century family homesteaders. The Island has important ecological attributes as well, being an important nesting site for black-backed and herring gulls, and common eiders. The day will be spent walking around the lowly-vegetated Island, investigating the rocky ledges, rolling hills, marine systems, and old foundations. The Island, a National Historic Landmark, provides an interesting collection of features for the naturalist as well as the Maine historian.



- FRENCHMAN BAY - BOAT TRIP - (Off Bar Harbor)

DATE AND TIME: Saturday, July 24, 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
MEETING PLACE: Bar Harbor Municipal Pier
COST: \$12 per person (\$15 non-member)
LIMIT: 25 people

Three island Preserves are scattered in Frenchman Bay. Northeast of Bar Harbor, Long Porcupine Island is large and covered with spruce-fir. Steep rocky cliffs and ledges bound most of its shores. Turtle Island, off Schoodic Peninsula, is also large and forested. Similar in character, however, much smaller, is Dram Island off Sorrento. The afternoon will be spent boating around these island Preserves looking for bald eagles, seabirds, ducks, and seals.



- GREAT WASS ISLAND - (Beals, Washington County)

DATE AND TIME: Saturday, July 31, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
MEETING PLACE: Coast Guard Station on Route 187, outside Jonesport and just before the bridge to Beals.
COST: \$3 per person (\$6 non-member)
LIMIT: 20 people

The Great Wass Island Preserve is a spectacular 1,540-acre tract protruding off the Jonesport-Addison peninsula in Washington County. The interior of the Island supports one of Maine's largest stands of Jack pine. The bogs are of statewide and national significance, representing northern coastal bog types. The rocky shoreline supports a diverse collection of marine invertebrates.

The day will be spent visiting the different natural habitats from forest to bog to shore. Be prepared to see some rare and interesting plants, many breeding birds, harbor seals, herons, shorebirds, seabirds, and marine flora and fauna. Great Wass Island is one of our most ecologically interesting Preserves.

- ANNUAL MEETING IN BAR HARBOR - Saturday August 7.
Field trips described in separate brochure.



- GREAT WASS ISLAND - (Beals, Washington County)

DATE AND TIME: Sunday, August 8, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
MEETING PLACE: Coast Guard Station on Route 187, outside Jonesport and just before the bridge to Beals.
COST: \$3 per person (\$6 non-member)
LIMIT: 20 people

For information about the Preserve, please refer to the earlier field trip to Great Wass Island.



- VINALHAVEN PRESERVES - BIG GARDEN AND BIG WHITE ISLANDS - (Vinalhaven)

DATE AND TIME: Monday, August 16, 8:30 a.m. (ferry leaves at 8:40 a.m.) to 4:30 p.m.
MEETING PLACE: Rockland Pier
COST: \$7 per person NOT including ferry (\$10 non-member)
LIMIT: 15 people

We will meet in Rockland and take the ferry to Vinalhaven (1 hour and 20 minutes). From Vinalhaven, we will go by boat to visit Big Garden and Big White Islands, two Preserves in Penobscot Bay. The Islands have rocky shores of glacially-rounded granite, small pocket beaches, interiors of old-age spruce-fir forest, salt marshes, and old fields. Parts of the Islands were heavily quarried in the past. Time permitting, the trip will terminate at Lane's Island Preserve, an island of rolling moors that extends into the Atlantic (about a ten minute walk from Vinalhaven's Main Street). Be prepared to see seabirds, ducks, and coastal island vegetation in Penobscot Bay overlooking the Camden Hills.



- THE HERMITAGE/ GULF HAGAS - (Katahdin Iron Works)

DATE AND TIME: Saturday and Sunday, August 21 and 22, 1:00 p.m. Saturday, to 5:00 p.m. Sunday.
MEETING PLACE: Katahdin Iron Works Main Gate. Twelve miles north of Brownville Junction, six and a half miles from Route 11.
COST: \$6 per person (\$9 non-member)
LIMIT: 10 people

High above the west branch of the Pleasant River is a stately grove of old-growth white pines known as The Hermitage. The area is rich in the history of the Maine woods and nearby Katahdin Iron Works. The two days will be spent hiking the Appalachian Trail and along Gulf Hagas, one of Maine's most spectacular gorges. Trip members will need to come prepared with overnight camping gear and food for three meals. Saturday night will be spent at one of the Katahdin Iron Works campsites adjacent to The Hermitage.

- FRENCHMAN BAY - BOAT TRIP - (Off Bar Harbor)

DATE AND TIME: Wednesday, August 25, 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
MEETING PLACE: Bar Harbor Municipal Pier
COST: \$12 per person (\$15 non-member)
LIMIT: 25 people

For information about the Preserves, please refer to earlier field trip to Frenchman Bay.

- DOUGLAS MOUNTAIN - (Sebago)

DATE AND TIME: Sunday, August 29, 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
MEETING PLACE: Douglas Mountain Preserve. Following Route 107 north toward Sebago, turn left at the Douglas Hill sign (Douglas Hill Road). Take a sharp left at the top of the hill and follow the road to a parking lot on the left near the road's end.
COST: \$2 per person (\$5 non-member)
LIMIT: 20 people

From the summit of Douglas Mountain, one looks out over Sebago Lake and the White Mountains. The panoramic view has been enjoyed by many for years. The Preserve includes the mountain top and surrounding forested hills. The trip will include a walk to the top of the mountain and hikes along the surrounding trails and old roads. Be prepared for magnificent views.

-----REGISTRATION COUPON-----

Maine Chapter
The Nature Conservancy
20 Federal Street
Brunswick, Maine 04011
Phone: (207) 729-5181

| Trip Name and Date | # Members | # Non-members | Amount Due |
|--------------------|-----------|---------------|------------|
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Total Amount Enclosed: _____

Name _____

Address _____ Zip _____

Telephone: Home _____ Work _____

- INDIAN AND FOWL MEADOW ISLANDS - BOAT TRIP - (Upper Kennebec River)

DATE AND TIME: Saturday, September 11, 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

MEETING PLACE: Parking lot near large Indian statue on Route 201 in Skowhegan.

COST: \$3 per person (\$6 non-member)

LIMIT: 15 people

Indian and Fowl Meadow Islands are forested, flood plain islands in the relatively undeveloped upper Kennebec River. A section of fast flatwater between Solon and N. Anson will be paddled, with lunch on Indian Island. From the water, we will see the first splashes of autumn color on the floodplain islands and surrounding hills. Participants must provide their own canoe(s), paddles, and life jackets; some canoeing experience is required.



- STEP FALLS - (Newry)

DATE AND TIME: Saturday, September 25, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

MEETING PLACE: Preserve parking lot. From the Route 2 junction, follow Route 26 toward Grafton Notch roughly eight miles. Parking lot entrance is on the right, just after a large white farmhouse, but before the road crosses Wight Brook.

COST: \$2 per person (\$5 non-member)

LIMIT: 15 people

Step Falls is the Maine Chapter's first Preserve. Wight Brook plunges dramatically through a series of cataracts, pools, and exposed granite ledges. Panoramic views of the surrounding mountains and valleys clad in autumn foliage will be had.



----- MEMBERSHIP COUPON -----

_____ Please enroll me as a member of The Nature Conservancy.

_____ \$10 Subscribing

_____ \$100 Acorn

_____ \$15 Family

_____ \$1,000 Life

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Zip



GREAT WASS



Great Wass Island Preserve on the southern portion of Beals Island continues to be the focus of study by the Chapter due to its great ecological significance. This large, 1,500-acre Preserve protects a number of rare intertidal plants and animals, and several rare or unusual upland plant species, as well as providing habitat for a wide variety of bird species, both breeding and migratory.

An effort to more accurately determine the breeding bird population of Great Wass was undertaken last year by Norman Famous, a wildlife ecologist who (among other things) works with the University of Maine's Wildlife Department. He established eight permanent, 20-acre census plots in six dominant vegetative communities, including mature spruce-fir, spruce-fir woodland, jack pine woodland, open low-shrub dominated plateau peatlands, and tall shrub-black spruce dominated woodlands. Although the complete results of his survey are not yet in, it does appear that the information gathered will add significantly to the understanding of the Preserve. Specific management recommendations will indicate, for example, where the best spots to see some of the birds are without doing damage to the more fragile parts of the Preserve. The bird populations will also be summarized by season and a checklist prepared which will be incorporated in materials for the visiting public.

A second study focused on an entirely different aspect of the Preserve — fire. The methods chosen to deal with fire

could potentially have a great effect on this Preserve. For example, regular fire-fighting procedures, which include creating fire lanes, could have a disastrous and permanent effect on the acres of peat bogs and their associated rare plant communities. On the other hand, jack pine (*Pinus banksiana* Lamb.) which is dominant over as much as one-third of the Preserve is generally fire dependent for reproduction. The jack pine on the Preserve is significant as it lies near the southeastern limit of its range and is one of the largest of the few stands in Maine. Was fire necessary to maintain the natural diversity of the Preserve? An examination of the historic role of fire was, therefore, undertaken by Elizabeth Thompson who has been the researcher/caretaker at the Preserve for the last three summers. From her initial studies, it appears that although there have been small fires on the Island, there have been no major fires, and the jack pine has continued to regenerate successfully. Therefore, the need of fire to assure this large stand of jack pine is apparently unnecessary. Recommendations from her study, under consideration now, endorse a continuation of the policy of fire suppression, but with stress on airborne control, resorting to fire breaks or roads only in extremes where danger to human life is involved. The objective will be to have a fire-control procedure in place which will incur the least damage to the Preserve.

DAMARISCOVE

Mummichogs and muskrats — just two of the year-round residents of Damariscove Island Preserve — were the objects of separate research projects last year. The mummichogs (*Fundulus heteroclitus*) which live in the brackish pond on the southern end of the Island potentially were a genetically isolated population. The study by Greg Garman and John Moring of the Maine Cooperative Fishery Research Unit and Irv Kornfield of the Department of Zoology, all at the University of Maine, determined that although the mummichogs on Damariscove are not a distinct population, the dense fish population and the high productivity of the pond make them worthy of further investigation.

Dr. Garrett Clough, a biology professor at Nason College in Springvale, continued his study of the muskrat population on Damariscove Island, research begun in 1978. The population is unusual in that the well-established colony lives in the upland grass and scrub and not in the usual stream and marsh habitat. Dr. Clough has been gathering data, primarily from the trapping season, which eventually he hopes will indicate some of the reasons for their success on the Island.

Finally, though hardly least, there was a study made of the colonial nesting bird populations on Damariscove. It was prepared by Alan Hutchinson and Sandy Lovett of the Migratory Bird Research Project of the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife with the assistance of the wildlife undergraduate students from UMO. They looked at the common eider, black-backed herring gulls, and black guillemots. Their study notes that of the some 3,500 islands along the Maine coast, about 350 are significant to colonial nesting seabirds. By their estimates, over 1,000 pairs of gulls and eiders nest on Damariscove, results which put this colony among the largest in Maine and for eider, one of the largest in the United States.

RESEARCH 1981

CRYSTAL BOG



Crystal Bog Preserve, with its almost 4,000 acres of bog and adjacent uplands, is also a prime target for research by the Chapter, and this year was no exception. Nationally recognized for its ecological significance, the research continues to produce more and more reasons for this designation. To date, research has been spearheaded by the two Co-chairmen of the Stewardship Committee, Sally Rooney and Candy McKellar; their work being coordinated with the other scientists on the Chapter's Scientific Advisory Committee. This summer they continued the detailed work of mapping the Preserve. Each major plant association has now been divided into its composite species. For example, a section defined as "low-land mixed wood" has now been more accurately delineated as "low black spruce/mountain holly community." Along the fen area, major communities have been further subdivided to more specifically define the habitat of the rare plant species. In addition, all major ecological strata have been completed and named for the dominant and co-dominant species. This typing of the major forest/plant associations and the rare plant habitats parallels other work being done by graduate students at the University of Maine, Orono, who are typing the open bog communities.



STEWARDSHIP

WORKSHOP SET

For the second year in a row, a workshop to aid the local Stewardship Committees in the management of their preserves will be held in the spring. Although designed for these Committees, the all-day workshop is open to all of those interested in the stewardship of Maine's significant natural features and lands.

This year's program will be held at the Camden Snow Bowl Lodge on Saturday, May 15. Eastern Regional Stewardship Director John Cook will provide the keynote talk for the day, and "how to" workshop sessions on brochures, trails and signs, a field trip to Fernald's Neck Preserve, and a picnic lunch will also be included. Informal, but informative, the day will offer the opportunity to exchange ideas and learn new skills. Each of the Chapter's 66 preserves is managed by a local preserve Stewardship Committee of 3-10 members. It is hoped that as many representatives as possible will be able to attend. For more information concerning the details of this meeting, contact the Chapter office.



Some of you may have wondered why you suddenly began to receive the Maine Chapter NEWS. Rest assured, it is not a membership request — just an effort to keep members of the Stewardship Committees better informed about events in the Chapter as a whole. The Chapter recognizes the great value of the contributions of time and efforts that Stewardship Committee members continually give to "their" preserves. So, consider the NEWS a thank you from us.

For Your Library

Maine's Critical Areas Program has recently published two very interesting reports on Maine's natural history. *An Annotated List of Maine's Rare Vascular Plants* by Susan C. Gawler describes recent rare plant work in Maine and discusses the various categories of rare plants, listing the 318 species considered rare in Maine. This 68 page report is available for \$2.00.

Maine Peatlands, Their Abundance and Ecology by Dr. Ian A. Worley provides an extensive discussion of the ecology and botanical composition of peatlands. The description and characteristics of different types of peatlands are discussed and illustrated in numerous drawings, maps, and photos. This 387 page report is available for \$14.00.

For copies, please write to:

Hank Tyler
Critical Areas Program
State House - Mail Station #38
184 State Street, Augusta, Maine 04333

A New Owner

From time to time, it becomes apparent that the Maine Chapter is not the best long-term owner for a particular parcel, rather that some other organization is more suited to meet the protection needs and responsibilities. Transfer to another organization is not an option dealt with lightly, however, and comes only after long and careful consideration and a detailed examination of the natural resources inventory and the desired protection objectives. Moreover, restrictions are imposed to ensure the continued protection of the property, and generally a reversionary clause is incorporated in the deed so the property would return to TNC should the restrictions not be carried out.

The Ritchey Preserve on Cushing Island in Casco Bay off Portland is a case in point. Here TNC owned a 60-acre parcel on the sea side of this large Island which also has numerous homes and other buildings. The property is perhaps best known for the local landmark of White Head Cliffs, but it, like so many islands in the Bay, also bears the scars of war preparations. Gun emplacements from three wars are sprinkled over the property and the whole Island, now silent signals of a more violent past.

Since TNC was given the property, a local land trust has been formed on the Island designed to keep major portions of the Island open and undeveloped in the future. In all likelihood, should such an organization have existed initially, TNC would not have become involved. Yet because TNC was able to hold the property and maintain its open quality over the years, the land did not succumb to development, and a large portion of the Island now remains open. The property will now be under the care and stewardship of the Cushing Island Conservation Foundation.

Although the snow is still very much with us, it is not too early to make note of the date of this year's Annual Meeting: **SATURDAY, AUGUST 7TH**, which will include:

- Boat trips in and around Blue Hill and Frenchman Bays to see some of the many island preserves there
- Natural history walks in Acadia National Park
- Tour of the College of the Atlantic
- Annual Meeting

As the field trips will start early and the events will last all day, participants may want to consider overnight accommodations in the Bar Harbor area; but it is suggested that you make those reservations early!

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

Maine Chapter

20 Federal St., Brunswick, Maine 04011



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